



Pancakes



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Chapter 1 by Luke Meyers

We drove all night without speaking. The radio faded in and out, and we filled the gaps with cheap mix tapes from a cardboard box, stuffing them into the antiquated cassette deck. As the sun began to rise over the chorus of Dire Straits' "Sultans of Swing," my companion broke the silence.

"Let's find some breakfast, killer."

I seethed. "Don't call me that."

"Why not? It's true, isn't it? I mean, he's dead." She fiddled with the air vent.

"I didn't mean for that to happen. I didn't want it to happen." If I'd been starting to have an appetite at the mention of breakfast, it was gone now. I felt ill. "I wish it hadn't."

"Relax, Chris, relax. I'm just yankin' ya."

I sighed and took a slow, steady breath. "I know, Connie. I just don't need to hear it, alright? This shit just happened."

She made a pensive face, still a bit mawkish but also honest. She had to keep things light; it's how she worked. "Of course. I'm sorry. So... what about the Pig'n'Blanket? There's one in like... five exits," she reported, flipping through listings on her smartphone. "I'm pretty sure I fucking require pancakes."

"Alright, sounds good." I turned up the stereo and lost myself in the road as Dire Straits faded away into the protracted intro for "Tunnel of Love." I'd find a way out of this mess.

The answers would come. The next step as any

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